

Exploring Sorority Housing Options at Ball State University: A Multi-University Research
Perspective

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

By

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Abstract

Sorority housing is one of the many parts of Greek life that is growing nationwide. The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate which type of housing would be best for Ball State University by looking into positives and negatives of sorority housing, different housing options at other universities, and the history of Ball State University's Greek Life community. Some of the housing options that will be discussed include no housing, residence halls, village, and row houses. The universities included in the research include Bowling Green State University, Indiana State University, North Carolina State University, University of Houston, Indiana University, and Ball State University. Interviews of sorority women and university staff members at more than five universities are used to enhance the research and provide perspective of housing options.

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I would like to thank all of the sorority women and Fraternity and Sorority Life staff members I interviewed with at different universities. Your perspectives and knowledge were a vital part of this project.

I would like to thank all of the universities I researched for providing me with examples of housing options and pictures of these options. Each university has set a great example of positive housing experiences for both men and women in the Greek community.

Introduction

“The chapter house is often the heart of the sorority” and according to Rachel Sieracke, it has a major impact on sisterhood in her organization (NPC, 2010). When asked why a house meant so much to her and her sisters, Rachel describes the destruction of their current house and what that brought to her chapter. The physical house is not something their chapter members will miss. It was old, small, and no longer suitable for their needs, which is part of the many reasons why the new housing is being built. It is what the house brought together and what happened inside of the house that matters most to the members. It was the laughter and tears, activities and meetings, and all the bonding moments shared in that home that will be missed most. Without having a house, there is no place for all of the members to come together to create these special moments the sisterhood brings. There is a much stronger bond when there is a place for members to share the good and bad, happiness and sadness, and their values. New members joining do not understand the immensity of the sisterhood now that they have no place to share it. Until the new housing is completed, this chapter will continue to find a place they can truly bond with the sisterhood.

Housing has always been a passion of mine which is why I have chosen to major in residential property management. Specifically, residential property management is the management of apartment communities, rental housing, and even commercial properties within a mixed-use facility. Fraternity and Sorority Life is a newly formed passion of mine since joining Alpha Omicron Pi in the fall of 2012. Combining these interests has created a topic which has been under researched but, has been discussed heavily within the higher education community. Greek housing has always been a hot topic among students in Greek Life and has the potential to continue to be a topic of high interest as technology, housing, and Greek Life changes. Currently

at Ball State University, there is housing for eight of the thirteen chapters in the Interfraternity Council, but the sorority women do not have a set type of housing. There are four chapters that have small university owned housing which allow seven or less to live in the house. The other six sororities have suites which can hold less than half of the chapter. Clearly, this housing is not nearly sufficient for the Ball State University Greek community because all of the chapters are required to find other rooms across campus that better fit their needs. There are many types of housing that could be used by Ball State University to enhance the members experience in Greek life which is what I have become most interested in. The purpose of this thesis is to get a better understanding of Ball State University's Greek Life community and figure out the best housing for future expansion and community growth.

Potential Research

The research I wanted to do includes finding scholarly articles, current events, and other literature on Greek Life housing. I also intended to conduct interviews, of at least one administrator or faculty member from different universities chosen to represent the different types of housing. By utilizing a network of students I know personally, I will ask them informally about their sorority housing experience. As I have stated before, this topic is not one that is researched thoroughly and does not have hard evidence stating best housing options for Greek communities. There are a small number of theses and articles which discuss chapter's housing, Greek facilities, and the effects of growing Greek Life on the housing sector I planned to explore. However, the best way I can gain knowledge about each type of housing is to interview others who know a sufficient amount about the housing. I decided to interview mainly faculty/advisors in order to get the best overall experience of the type of housing offered at the university. By getting information from both student and faculty I will be able to understand

what type of housing Ball State University is looking for based on what students and the university desires. These interviews will also include faculty from Ball State University but will also include the knowledge I have gained being a member of a women's organization in order to get a full understanding of the community. Based on these interviews and literature I hope to come to a conclusion about Ball State's community sorority housing options.

Research Questions and Outcomes

The first and most important question I wanted to get an answer for was what type of housing would be the most beneficial to the Ball Stat University Greek Life community. In order to get an answer to this question I needed to ask about the different types of housing for sororities. After finding the answer to this question I will ask general questions about each housing option which includes questions like what the benefits of each type of housing, what the negatives of each type of housing, how does each type of housing affects sororities, does the housing have an effect on sisterhood, and how does housing affect the relationships between sororities. These are all questions I could ask during my interviews. Another important question I wanted to know was what the students' perspective is compared to the administration's perspective about specific types of housing. As a student, I have a very good understanding of one side but need to focus more on the faculty perspective. The faculty and students have different ideas they consider important when it comes to choosing or managing housing. Students have high expectations when it comes to housing, and I wanted to know what is the most popular or sought after type of housing among campuses. Along with what students on other campuses want for sorority housing, I want to know specifically, what is the most popular and effective type of housing among students at Ball State.

When finished, this thesis will be accessible for anyone to look at through Ball State University Library's CardCat and databases. Since the main focus of the thesis is potential types of housing at Ball State University, the main target audience would be Ball State University administrators, students involved in Greek Life, and anyone interested in the Greek Life community. Although the research is partially Ball State University based, it is my goal to create beneficial research to be used not only by the Ball State University Greek Life community, but used as an example for other Greek Life communities at other universities.

Process

At the beginning stages of my thesis I planned to talk with only eight people from four universities about their Greek Life housing then compare it to Ball State's community. I started with four types of housing which has grown to ten types of housing after conducting research. My initial goal has not changed but has focused in on specifics. The original plan was to look at housing options and figure out which type would be best for Ball State University's Greek Life community. I am now focusing on the explanation of why a certain type of housing is best. The change was due to the amount of information and mixed reviews I was receiving during my interviews. My interviews started out with some basic questions I planned to ask everyone but, after the first few interviews I eventually changed some of the questions and asked more follow up semi-structured interview questions. While starting the writing process I realized I wanted to change my outline completely in order to make more sense to readers who do not know much about Fraternity and Sorority Life. This change caused me to do more research on the history of sororities and organize my thesis in a way that explains the overview before discussing the Ball State community.

Personal Goals

The first personal goal I would like to achieve while writing my thesis is to improve my skills in research, interviewing, and writing. These skills will be extremely beneficial after graduation because I will be constantly writing, conversing with new people, and researching information within the apartment and residential industry. This project will be using all three skills consistently and will require a high skill level of detail to get the overall outcome. Throughout college I have been working on these skills, but this project will bring everything I have learned and compile the work into one large, impactful project.

The second personal goal I have is to learn about the different types of housing. I have become interested in learning as much as I can about Greek Life so I can share positive experiences with others and encourage membership in organizations. There is so much to learn about the different housing options I will be looking into. Having a basic knowledge of each option will not only broaden my ideas of what housing is, but will also allow me to partake in these types of housing decisions in the future. By researching different types of housing I will gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences and be more knowledgeable about my future career decisions in the housing industry.

The third personal goal I have is to be able to write a thesis that will be useful to others around me whether that be my own university or an example for another university. The thesis will be factual based on articles, but have a personal component because of interviews directly related to the question of what housing will be beneficial for Ball State University. Other campuses can use the information I have gathered on the schools with each specific type of housing and relate it to their university's community.

History of Sororities

The first fraternity was founded in 1824, long before women were allowed to attend colleges and universities. By 1870, there were less than one percent of females ages 18 to 21 enrolled in higher education (Becque, 2007). Even though the number of women attending college was small, they found a way to come together through secret societies. The first two female secret societies are believed to have started in the 1850's. Adelphean society, founded in 1851, and Philomathean society, founded in 1852, were both founded at Georgia Female College, now known as Wesleyan College of Macon Georgia. The first women's fraternity was founded on April 28, 1867 at Monmouth College in Illinois and is known today as Pi Beta Phi. In 1870, Kappa Alpha Theta was the first Greek letter organization founded at Indiana Asbury University, now DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. Later in 1870, Monmouth College was the home to the third women's fraternity founded, Kappa Kappa Gamma. Alpha Phi was founded in 1872 and Delta Gamma was founded shortly after in 1873. Gamma Phi Beta was founded in 1874 at Syracuse University and began to call themselves a sorority in 1882 (Adventures in Friendship, 2012).

The word sorority comes from the Latin word "soror" meaning sister. The advisor for Gamma Phi Beta at Syracuse University, a Professor of Latin, thought the word suited them better which is how the word sorority came to be. However, many women's organizations had already been founded and could not change their name. Today, all women's organizations are referred to as sororities, but may have the word fraternity in their official title (Appalachian State University). In 1904, Philomathean Society changed its name to Phi Mu and, in 1913, Adelphean Society changed its name to Alpha Delta Pi and both joined NPC in 1911 and 1909 respectively (Hill, Rawan, Evans, & Cichowicz, 2013).

Due to the discrimination of women, the members decided they needed to come together rather than operate on their own as national organizations. Kappa Kappa Gamma invited Pi Beta Phi, Kappa Alpha Theta, Alpha Phi, Delta Gamma, Gamma Phi Beta, and Delta Delta Delta to gather in Boston in April of 1891. In the first meeting they discussed recruitment and being loyal to other women's fraternities. The second time the group met was in 1893 and was considered an informal meeting at the Chicago World's fair. The organizations did not meet again for nine years until May 24th, 1902. Alpha Phi invited the original seven chapters plus Alpha Chi Omega and Chi Omega to a conference in Chicago to discuss standards of their women's organizations. Alpha Chi Omega and Chi Omega could not attend so the remaining seven sororities met which resulted in the formation of the Inter-Sorority Conference. Later it was changed to the current name of National Panhellenic Council. Currently, the "National Panhellenic Conference is the premier advocacy and support organization for the advancement of the sorority experience (NPC, 2012)." It provides guidance to its twenty-six international and national sororities and women's fraternities as well as serves as the national voice on contemporary issues of sorority life. It is the oldest and largest women's membership organization that represent more the four million women at 65 colleges and universities (Adventures in Friendship, 2012).

Benefits of Sorority Housing

Housing located on or near campus provides students with many benefits and the same goes for sorority housing. Sorority housing can be defined as a gathering space for sorority women in the same organizations either on campus or directly next to campus. The main three benefits of sorority housing include learning communities, community involvement and engagement in both Greek and non-Greek activities, and positive relationships in the organization, Greek Life community, university community, and surrounding town community.

Learning communities are not a new concept and are used by the universities within residence halls. In the most basic sense, a learning community is a group of people who share common academic goals and attitudes and can meet to collaborate on classwork. According to Blackburn's and Janosik's research on Learning Communities in Fraternity/Sorority Housing, learning communities "support the growth of critical-thinking skills and enhance student retention" (Blackburn, Janosik, 2009). This is slightly different than what is provided within a sorority home. There is not always someone with the same academic interest living in the sorority house or as a member of the organization. What are provided in these homes are chapters with similar academic goals, projects, and services that help support the members' academic success. All NPC organizations have a member who is in charge of the chapter members' academic success. By having a gathering space for members to meet, there is the opportunity for collaboration of these success tools that will further the individual in their area of academic study. Throughout my interviews with students from multiple universities, there was a common theme of academic involvement among sorority women by working on homework and their studies with members of their organizations.

As a member of a Greek organization it is required by a majority, if not all organizations to be involved in the Greek community, university community, and surrounding community. When organizations such as sororities have housing, it allows "members [to] feel a greater sense of involvement within their collegiate experience than non-affiliated students and that this connection keeps them in school" and "actively engaged in their chapters" (Blackburn and Janosik, 2009). Having a centralized location for all members of a sorority to meet allows them to have better communication within their chapters and encourages social behavior. It is easy to post information or promote events within a chapter home so members with similar interests can

get more involved. Women will gather at the sorority house before events and community activities to go together as a group so no one will be alone. There are so many things that happen within the different communities surrounding a college it is almost impossible to know all activities and events every day. Being surrounded by other sorority members, there is an opportunity to learn about or get involved in new things while encouraging friendships within the organization.

All of the NPC organizations were founded with sisterhood as a core value. The relationship between sorority members of the same organization is known as the sisterhood and is the bond that is formed through friendship and ritual. Each organization has a different sisterhood and is also unique at the university level. The best way to strengthen any sisterhood is to cultivate the relationships with continual positive interactions. A sisterhood with the most positive interactions will be the strongest and one of the best ways to encourage positive interactions is through living in a chapter home. Some chapters are so large talking to everyone at a chapter meeting or on campus is difficult. By having a centralized location for everyone to meet, there is the chance of meeting other sisters at any time and getting the opportunity to get to know them. Jamison Carson, a sorority woman at University of Houston, explained how living in her sorority home helped her build better relationships with women in a different friend group as her (Personal communication, March 3, 2016). Rachel Sieracke has experienced both having a chapter home and not having a chapter home as her university was in the process of building new houses. She said her chapter's house was the headquarters for all her sisters to meet. When they lost their house the sisterhood started to dwindle because there was not a place of their own to hang out, hold events, have meetings, or relax between classes. She said her chapter house allowed the sisterhood to thrive (Personal communication, 2015).

Frequently, the sorority homes are located next to or near each other which builds a sense of community. Many sorority women on Indiana University's campus would say living in a sorority home has allowed members to have a positive relationship with different communities. The sororities have a much stronger relationship with other sororities because all of the houses are close and the women all go to other houses to support their philanthropies and also to get to know them. It is very important for the organizations within the Greek Life community to get along because they share many of the same values such as scholarship, community service and engagement, philanthropic responsibilities, and personal growth. Being a part of a community involves supporting others and cultivating relationships. With the option of housing, the organizations in the Greek Life community are able to create and foster the sense of community.

The Greek Life community is a smaller community within the larger community at a university. This means members in Greek organizations are not the only ones who attend the university. Having good relationships among other students is important not only to the image of the Greek Life community but for the future of all Greek organizations. Sorority housing gives the organizations the ability to have a presence on campus and encourages membership. A lack of presence or knowing about Greek Life will bring membership numbers down which could terminate active organizations if numbers get too low.

Through my own personal experience, I know members of sororities are extremely involved in the community outside of the university. Community service is a value of most social fraternities and sororities and service hours are accomplished typically in the surrounding community. The sorority house not only provides a presence on a campus but can have a presence in the surrounding community. The Greek Life community considers community service one of their best known values with both communities working together, so much is

accomplished and new relationships are formed. The house can hold events to support agencies in the community and can provide members a central location to meet before assisting these agencies.

Whether it is big or small, the need for sorority housing is there along with all the benefits the housing provides.

“All students benefit from learning environments comprised of safe, clean, comfortable, modern facilities. They also benefit from a sense of belonging and community on campus. Certainly, the need to design the physical environment of a university campus in a manner that enhances the sense of community and common experience is well established” (Gratto, Gratto, Henry, & Miller, 2002).

Learning communities are a huge, academic growth factor sorority housing provides and there are countless other ways of growth such as involvement, communication, and relationships among different organizations and communities.

Negatives of Sorority Housing

There are two negatives I perceive from personal narratives and research. The first being the obvious financial burden it brings to student members, organizations, and/or universities. The financial aspect depends on the type of housing which will be discussed later. There is one group that always carries the financial burden no matter what type of housing it is because this group is the one getting the most benefits of the housing. The student members of these women's organizations will have to pay more for dues to go towards the construction or upkeep of the house. The cost for most houses is relatively expensive depending on the type of housing. With all the other costs of attending college, housing costs seem fairly pointless to many people. All of the students interviewed viewed cost as the biggest downside to sorority housing.

Another negative mentioned about sorority housing was the exclusivity of the Greek Life community. This downside does not necessarily apply to all universities or students at the universities. University of Houston sometimes has the outlook that the Greek Life community living in the house is very “exclusive and stuck up” as Jamison put it. She said because there were only a certain number of organizations allowed in the housing they currently have, the organizations tend to think of themselves as better than others. This can sometimes happen when housing is too small for the size of the community to all have homes in a central location (Personal communication, March 3, 2016). The only way to fix this problem is to get rid of all the housing or develop more housing to fit the needs of the Greek Life community.

Types of Sorority Housing

Not having chapter facilities is one of the most common types of housing across America for fraternities and sororities. This means the sorority’s have no centralized location that is considered their space. When universities lack housing for sorority women, they usually have somewhere for the sororities to meet. Some schools may have a Greek Life chapter room where all of the organizations are able to reserve for meetings and events. Other universities may have a Greek Life community building which has multiple rooms for multiple organizations to meet at once.

There is also the option of using rooms on the campus which is what the sororities at Bowling Green State University are required to do. The school is currently in the process of redesigning all of their sorority housing, so they currently have no space of their own. Rachel Sieracke, a student at Bowling Green State University said they have to reserve rooms in the Student Union whenever they want to have a chapter meeting. She explained the process of recruitment and the challenges they faced due to lack of space for all sorority members and

potential new members. Rachel also talked about the living situation on their campus now that they do not have any centralized living quarters. Many sorority women share housing off campus with other members in their chapters, members of other chapters, and/or non-affiliated members. Houses that have a group of women from one sorority can be used to hold smaller events like socials, mixers, or sisterhoods. Due to the smaller size of these houses, they cannot hold any event that would require all chapter members to be there (Personal communication, 2015). These houses are usually referred to as satellite homes and are passed down from year to year between members. Many universities have houses like these even if they provide other living options for the sororities because not all sorority members are required to live in the sorority housing.

University Owned Residence Hall

Another type of sorority housing is located within the university owned residence hall. This could be a residence hall built specifically for sororities or an older residence hall that has become a sorority housing hall with the growth of chapters. With the residence hall style there is an added level of accountability for the women, such as a requirement of the live-in Resident Assistant or RA. Majority of residence halls, both Greek and non-Greek, are required to have some type of RA. There are many different ways to include this RA within the Greek residence hall and many times the responsibilities are different between a typical RA and a Greek RA. Since sororities have their own events and activities, the Greek RAs do not deal with the programming as much as a non-Greek RA does. Their main job is to unite the sorority with the housing and residence life community. They also are in charge of enforcing rules and dealing with disciplinary problems. The Greek RAs can be members of the chapter they supervise or members of another chapter depending on the school's policy. Another added accountability method is having a hall director or Greek Life advisor living in the residence hall with the

women. The hall director is typical with most residence halls to make sure everything is running efficiently. With the residence hall option there are three main styles which include suite, floor, or building/hall.

Suite style. The suite style is a more advanced option than the chapter room but located within a residence hall where each sorority has its own meeting space. Although most suites do not allow for sorority members to stay overnight, they provide a sense of belonging to a chapter. The suites usually include a large room, usually used for chapter meetings, a kitchen or kitchenette, and possibly a bathroom. At University of Louisville there are these suite style housing options for all of their women's chapters. Since most suites do not allow overnight stays, many of the women with suites have satellite housing or live with other members in their chapter. There is also the option of combining the suite with floor style living.

Floor Style. The floor style in residence halls has a different sorority located on each floor or hall of the building. For instance, if a building has six floors, there would be six sororities in the building. Each floor would house the same number of women, either in single or double rooms, and there would be a community bathroom or semiprivate bathrooms on each floor. There could also be a lounge room and/or study room on each floor specifically for the chapter members. The women could have access to all six floors or only their sorority's floor depending on residence hall policies.

Building/Hall style. The building/hall style varies in function depending on how the building was designed but it is very similar to the floor style. For example, a building has four halls with different access doors and each hall may have a different name with multiple floors. Each hall houses a different sorority allowing four sororities in the building. At Indiana State University, there are two buildings which house four sororities in each. There are four separate

entrances for each sorority in a building that allows access to the lounge and chapter room. There are hallways in between the four sorority areas which have a staircase or elevator leading up to the different floors. These hallways are shared by the adjacent sororities and have doors on each floor to get to the side the building that houses the sorority. All doors in the building have ID swipe limited access for security purposes so sorority members are only allowed on their chapter's side of the building. Both the floors and building/hall residence hall options can have a shared community bathroom or in room bathrooms. Most rooms are singles or doubles with their own key access to the room. On the outside of these hall there is the possibility of displaying the chapters Greek letters to let others know who is living in the particular part of the building.

Greek Village

The village style housing is becoming more popular among universities. The village style is where all of the Greek Life organizations live in a community or neighborhood setting. The village housing option is usually owned by the university and located on campus. Since it is university owned, there is usually the requirement of a Greek RA, a Greek Life graduate assistant, or staff member. The difference with this RA is it could be anyone from Greek Life, not just a NPC sorority. There are three different options within the village plan which include townhomes, apartments, and free standing homes.

Townhouses. Bowling Green State University is in the construction process of a townhouse village option. With this option, there are a few townhomes located around a central area which creates a Greek neighborhood or village. Each townhouse can have chapter rooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, living rooms, bedrooms, and bathrooms. The townhouses can be designed where part of the house is accessible by everyone at one level such as having amenities located on the first or second floors for the entire building. This allows for more community

interactions between residents in the building. The townhouses can be different sizes with a different number of bedrooms to accommodate both smaller and larger chapters. This housing option is ideal for universities with ranging chapter members between thirty to seventy members.

Apartments. The University of Houston has apartment style village housing which is similar to the townhouse village because there are multiple buildings housing different chapters. These apartments are designed like a typical apartment building where each apartment home has a small kitchen, living room, bedrooms, and bathrooms. Sometimes there is laundry inside individual homes or there could be a community laundry room. This option often has a general chapter room for the different organizations to share. The number of buildings, the design, and how many members are in the chapters determines how the apartment homes are shared between chapters in a Greek Life community.

Free Standing Homes. The third option in the village style is free standing chapter houses. This option could be homes owned by the individual chapters or, more commonly, the university. These individual houses include a living room and/or chapter room, a kitchen, laundry room, bedrooms, and bathrooms. The size of the chapter determines how large the house is and how many amenities are included within the home. What makes these houses unique is the way they are laid out relative to one another. The village style means the homes are close to each other or around an open space to be shared by the entire community. The University of West Georgia has free standing university owned village housing for eighteen organizations within their fraternity and sorority life. Each chapter has its own house with a shared parking lot and community building. Each house has a living/chapter room, a residential style kitchen, laundry facilities, mix of single and double bedrooms, and semi-private bathrooms. If a building is university owned, then there is usually a smaller kitchen within the building because the

university sometimes requires residents to have meal plans. This is the case with all village style options with the exception of free standing homes because they could be university owned or chapter owned.

Village Combination. North Carolina State University is in the process of building a brand new Greek village which requires the destruction of their current housing. The new village housing project will have twenty free standing chapter houses, two townhouse buildings that have eight townhouses, and an apartment building. This combines all three options in the village style which will be able to support a diverse Greek Life community with chapters of all sizes. This is important because it can create more of a community feel by including all members of the Greek community no matter the size of the chapter. This is relevant especially within the National Pan-Hellenic Council and Multi-Greek Councils because they have much smaller sororities than the NPC chapters.

Chapter Row/Free Standing Homes

The most common housing in Greek Life is free-standing row housing which can be chapter owned or university owned. It is laid out the same where each house is located on a street or two which is usually called Greek Row. This option of housing is usually the largest type of housing because individual chapters get a large space to house the most amount of women as possible and fit all of their Greek Life community needs into one building. These houses have the most accountability for women since much of the decisions are up to the chapter or the chapters headquarters. These houses usually have what used to be known as a "house mom," but are now known as house director, graduate assistant, or live-in. A house director is defined as a person acting as a chaperone in a group residence. Each responsible adult holds the chapter to

high standards and is responsible for enforcing rules, risk management, and punishment for breaking rules.

If the house is owned by the university, all the houses could look the same or similar on the inside and outside. This university owned housing is similar to every other university owned home where the members are required to have a meal plan. This means they do not have a large kitchen or dining room. The typical rooms in a university owned row housing includes the bedrooms, bathrooms, laundry room, chapter room and/or living room. Each chapter house typically has its own lot which includes its own parking lot.

Chapter owned housing is different depending on the sorority's inter/national headquarters requirements. These houses are unique to each chapter and look different from each other. These houses typically have a cook/chef to accommodate the amount of women living in the house so the kitchen is a little larger with a large pantry, refrigerator, and freezer. There is also a chapter room, living room, bedrooms, bathrooms, dining halls, and a variety of rooms specific to meet the individual chapter's needs. Indiana University is well known in the state of Indiana for having traditional, large chapter owned housing. There are nineteen sorority houses located on Greek Row, also known as North Jordan Street. These houses are designed to fit about a hundred women from each chapter and have chapter rooms able to hold almost three hundred.

There are many more housing options that are based off of or combine the ones previously discussed in this thesis. What I have discussed is the most basic break down of some of the most common types of housing. Examples of the types of housing previously discussed are found in Appendix A. Each housing option has positives and negatives related to it and different results at different universities. The best way to figure out which housing option is best for Ball State University is to get a better understanding of the community.

History of Sororities at Ball State University

Since Ball State University started as a branch of the Indiana Normal School and College of Applied Science, there were not accurate historical records on Greek-letter organizations. There was a time when fraternities were allowed, but in 1907 the President of the school, Francis M. Ingler, banned them. Once the Normal school closed, the Eastern Branch of Indiana State Normal School was opened on April 4, 1918 which is when many accurate records started. In 1919, the Girls Club started and remained the governing body for sororities throughout the following two decades. Due to the inaccuracy of records prior to the Girls Clubs founding, 1919 is celebrated as the founding year for the Greek community at Ball State University (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

Throughout the 1920s, many organizations were created to start of Greek Life for sorority women. In 1920, there were four women's organizations on campus which included Sigma Alpha Sigma, Alpha, Gamma Gamma, and Pi Zeta. Sigma Alpha Sigma sorority becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Alpha Sigma Alpha on December 12, 1936 and is the first organization at Ball State University to affiliate with a national organization. Alpha sorority became the currently known the NPC organization Alpha Chi Omega on June 10, 1950. Gamma Gamma was established in 1920s but did not become a part of the NPC organization Pi Beta Phi until August 23, 1952. Pi Zeta sorority becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Sigma Kappa on March 20, 1954. LAMARDA was also established this year but changed their name in 1922 to Lambda Delta Phi (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

In 1921, two more women's sororities joined which include Mu Zeta and J.J.G. club sorority. On April 20, 1945 Mu Zeta becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Sigma Sigma Sigma. J.J.G. club sorority became Omega in 1924 and, later in the same year, Omega Sigma

Chi, which final becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Delta Zeta on February 28, 1953 (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

In 1922, Kappa Kappa sorority was established which later becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Alpha Omicron Pi on May 24, 1952. Phi Delta Xi was also established this year. In 1923, Epsilon Delta was established. In 1924, Sigma Beta Tau sorority was established and on September 28, 1945 becomes a chapter of Pi Sigma Kappa. Later in the same year Pi Sigma Kappa merges with Sigma Kappa. Also in 1924 the Entre-Nous Club sorority was established. In 1925, Psi Theta sorority was established and becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Chi Omega on May 10, 1952. In 1926, Sigma Epsilon sorority and Delta Sigma sorority were established. Delta Sigma changed their name the same year to Delta Sigma Althleta and became a chapter of Alpha Sigma Tau on May 26, 1945 (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

During the 1930's, 40's, and 50's, there was minimal growth of sororities partially due to the war. There was some National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations formed which is the historically African American Greek letter organizations. The biggest event that occurred during this time was in 1938, the sororities Lambda Delta Phi, Phi Delta Xi, and Epsilon Delta merged to create Phi Delta Lambda. In 1944, Phi Delta Lambda becomes a chapter of Delta Sigma Epsilon which merged with Delta Zeta on August 22, 1956 (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

The 1960's and 70's were years for growth and expansion at Ball State. In 1961, Gamma Theta was established and becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Alpha Phi on November 7, 1964. In 1966, Sigma Beta Chi sorority is established and becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Delta Gamma on April 11, 1970. In 1967, Kappa Theta Rho sorority is established

and on December 27, 1970 becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Kappa Alpha Theta. In 1969, Sigma Kappa Alpha sorority was established. In 1970, Lambda Gamma Nu sorority was established and on October 11, 1980 becomes a chapter of Delta Delta Delta. There were some closings of sororities with Alpha Sigma Tau and Sigma Kappa Alpha closing their chapters at Ball State University (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016). In 1977 there were a total of nine-hundred-fifty women involved in twelve NPC organizations at Ball State University (Hague, 1977).

The 1980's at Ball State was a time for growth and expansion with the establishment of two more sororities and a reestablishment of one. In 1983, the Delta Zeta chapter at Ball State University closed and two years later was re-established in 1985. In 1987, Lambda Gamma Gamma sorority was established and on November 5, 1988 becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Alpha Gamma Delta. In 1989, Lambda Phi Gamma sorority was established and later becomes a chapter of the NPC organization Phi Mu on April 5, 1990 (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

The 1990's was the last year Ball State established any new sorority. In 1991 Lambda Beta Alpha sorority was established and became a chapter of Kappa Delta on April 4, 1992. Over the next few years the only activity with women's organizations was the closing of four chapters. In 1996, Alpha Sigma Alpha and in 1997 Delta Delta Delta closes their chapters at Ball State University. In 2003, Sigma Sigma Sigma and in 2008, Kappa Alpha Theta closes their chapters at Ball State University (Ball State University Greek Historical Timeline, 2016).

Currently there are ten NPC sororities and around 1,500 women involved in these organizations. Over the past ten years, with the exception of Kappa Alpha Theta, all the sororities have been experiencing significant growth in their chapter sizes. The percentages of

undergraduates who are Greek have grown from 8% in the fall semester of 2008 to 15% as of fall 2015. In this same time, sorority member averages have gone from 68 to 145 members (Ball State University Semester Reports, 2015).

Current Housing

In 1957 a residence hall on campus provided eight sorority suites. Sororities moved in and out as changes occurred with active and non-active chapters. Currently, there are six of the ten sororities who have suites in Woodworth Hall and the other four are in university owned housing. The sororities living in the suites include Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Omicron Pi, Alpha Phi, Chi Omega, Delta Zeta, and Pi Beta Phi. The sororities with university owned housing includes Alpha Gamma Delta, Kappa Delta, Phi Mu, and Sigma Kappa. This university owned housing was bought by the four remaining sororities in 2008. These houses have full amenities such as a kitchen and a formal living room but, there is only enough room for eight chapter members and was never meant to be a permanent form of housing (Yorko, 2014).

There has been discussion over the past few years about a more permanent housing option for sororities. The first step of this process is to identify and research options for Ball State by looking into different universities such as University of North Carolina, Western Carolina University, and University of Connecticut. These universities all have a Greek Village which Ball State would like to develop over time. The next step in the process is working with the [Inter] National and local sororities to develop a housing plan that will meet the needs of both current members and future members of the sororities. Until all ten sororities, their headquarters, and Ball State University's administration can come to an understanding and compromise, there will be no housing decisions made in the future (Yorko, 2014).

Conclusion

Since the start of women's organization there have been many changes and much growth especially within the housing sector. Studies have proven the effectiveness of learning communities, and there has been discussion about the involvement and engagement of the affect the sorority housing has on members and their communities. Although there are some negatives sides of sorority housing, such as cost and exclusivity, the benefits are more abundant and have a greater impact on the sorority women as concluded from the personal conversations with students. The different housing options discussed ranged from no houses or meeting spaces to university owned buildings to large and exquisite chapter owned houses. Each housing option had different sub-options with more details and options. There were so many positive and negative qualities with each option, including overlapping qualities, making it difficult to differentiate. Even the history of Ball State University's organizations is confusing at times with all the change that has affected the housing provided since 1919. However, all of these things discussed are key elements in deciding what type of housing is best for a campus and community.

After examining the positives and negatives of the different housing options and looking at the past and present Greek Life community at Ball State University, I would endorse the village option with townhomes, apartments, and free standing homes as the best type of housing for the Ball State University's Greek Life community. Although I believe free standing chapter owned houses would be the best option for NPC sororities only, and the easiest option for the university, it has been proven through my research and involvement in the community, that bringing different organizations together to create a village has the most benefits and positive impacts on everyone involved. Sorority housing is overall beneficial and needed within a Greek

community which is why Ball State University should continue to research and take steps heading in that direction. Nevertheless, there is more to a Greek Life community than sororities which is why the three types of housing within the village option work best.

What comes next in the housing process or research? As I stated earlier sorority housing is important but it is only a small piece of the larger Greek Life community. Research on National Panhellenic Council, Interfraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council, and National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations needs to be done as well as an examination of their influence on the community. An important part of this research is looking at each chapter's needs and how housing will benefit the organization. How would the organizations use the village space? What organizations should live in the houses, townhouses, or apartments? There are many ways to decide who will live in each building including the number of members in the organizations, what each organization can afford, and who is in the best standing based on academics, conduct, and accreditation. Where will the most effective and feasible location for the Greek Village be built? Ball State University owns land around campus and is constantly developing and redeveloping land to fit the future needs of the university. There is definitely land for this development but the focus is finding enough land that will be appropriate. How can everyone involved assist in the financial burden of the Village? All of these questions need to be answered and discussed in order to move forward with any housing project. Ball State University is not only ready to make progress on a Greek Village with houses, townhomes, and apartments, but is ready to make history for the sake of sorority women and the Greek Life community.

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Appendix A



Residence Hall Suite Style



Residence Hall Floor Style



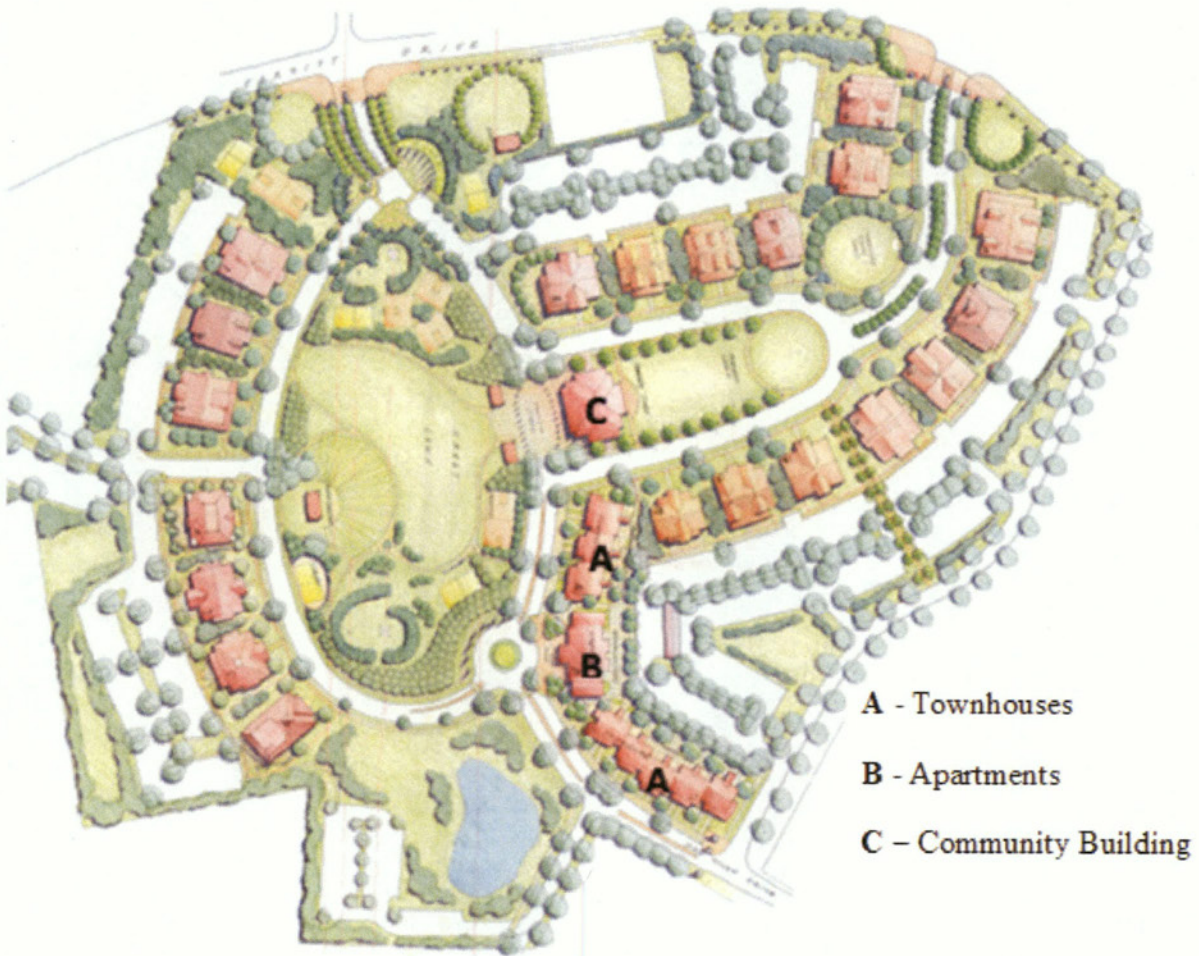
Residence Hall Building Style



Village Townhouses



Village Free Standing Homes



North Carolina State University Village



North Carolina State University Village Townhomes



North Carolina State University Village Apartments



University Owned Free Standing/Row Houses



Chapter Owned Free Standing/Row Houses

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Haney Martha
TCA/Monographs at Ball State University

Add a photo



Kevin M. Carey

Associate Director of Student Involvement at Wittenberg University

Wittenberg University • Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana Area • 500+ a

Send InMail

Springfield, Ohio

Hello, my name is Kevin Carey. I am currently a graduate student at Ball State University where I work with the fraternity and interfraternity organizations. I am also a graduate of Ball State University's Gender Studies Program at Ball State University. I am a recent graduate of Ball State University's Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education Masters program, where I also achieved a Certificate in University and College Teaching. Since graduating from Ball State University, I have furthered my education through the University of Utah's Certificate in Victim Advocacy through the Center for Legal Studies.

I am a 2013 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University. My Bachelor of Arts is in English. I serve as a national volunteer for Sigma Pi Fraternity as the Illinois Province Archon, and I am a Board Member for the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

Below you will find experiences from Ball State University, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, North American Interfraternity Conference, and Zeta Tau Alpha International Office. I have a passion for student involvement, belonging, and inclusion of all humans.

Media (1)



K.Carey Resume

See less

View more profiles like Kevin M.'s on the go
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Highlights

You both worked at Ball State University

You both worked at Ball State University from Jun 2015 to Dec 2016

Experience

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People Also Viewed



Kari Murphy • 3rd

Speaker of truth. Doesn't shy away from tough conversations. Innovate and passionate.



Kayla Cullum • 3rd

Greek Life Graduate Assistant at Ball State University



Trevor Holland • 3rd

Site Assistant at National Student Leadership Conference



Eric J. Pegués • 3rd

Assistant Director, Student Life at Ball State University



Preston Meister • 3rd

Incoming SMB Account Manager at Gartner



Hope Deyo • 3rd

Student at Ball State University



Daniel Majestic • 3rd

Co-Founder @ Drone Camp, Owner @ Ball State Properties LLC, Student at Ball State University

Juliann Kasza • 3rd

Student Affairs Professional

Logan Bagby • 3rd

Executive Chapter President at Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity

Dustin Balboa • 3rd

Student at Ball State University

Learn the skills Kevin M. has

Motivating and Engaging Employees

Viewers: 40,156

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New Manager Foundations

Viewers: 121,577

Associate Director of Student Involvement

Wittenberg University

Apr 2017 – Present • 3 mos

Springfield, Ohio

[See more courses](#)**Assistant Director of Greek Life**

Ball State University

Jun 2015 – Apr 2017 • 1 yr 11 mos

Muncie, Indiana Area

- Serve as the direct advisor to the Panhellenic Council and its 10 National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) organizations and one associate member organization, Gamma Rho Lambda; manage council budget and funds totaling \$40,500
- Supervise six graduate assistants, student interns, and graduate practicum students
- Oversee and supervise a live-in sorority staff and their responsibilities; support chapter's suite and housing facilities in collaboration with Housing and Residence Life and Business Affairs
- Design and implement the Greek Peer Advocate sexual violence prevention training program and develop curriculum and educational materials for sexual assault prevention and bystander intervention
- Advise Greek Peer Advocate executive team comprised of 4 directors and 8 leads for training sessions
- Assist with chapter conduct, investigation, and sanctioning process for 30 inter/national organizations
- Advise the membership development programs and events planned by the Interfraternity, National Pan-Hellenic, and Panhellenic Councils
- Teach Emerging Greek Leaders course in the spring semester focused on leadership development within the Greek community
- Coordinate the implementation, logistics, and marketing of 7 summer bridge programs representing 6 departmental areas with 6 University staff members
- Serve as Program Director for the Cardinal Leadership and Service Seminar (C.L.A.S.S.) and oversee its logistics, curriculum, and its \$25,000 budget
- Chair the Office of Student Life assessment committee and supervise its 2 Graduate Assistant members

Affiliate Faculty, Women & Gender Studies Program

Ball State University

Aug 2016 – Dec 2016 • 5 mos

Muncie, Indiana Area

- Instruct a Special Topics in Women and Gender Studies 300-level course of 29 students focused on the lifespan model of men and masculinities
- Create course curriculum focused on topics related to: boyhood and adolescence, collegiate men, men of color, violence, men's health, and current events in the media/pop culture
- Compose assignments focused on discussion, reflection, analytical reading and writing skills, and presentation opportunities
- Incorporate individualized feedback through Blackboard course management site and discussion posts
- Conceptualize final project focused on researching different communities of men and the performance of masculinities; deliver event to create conversation on campus and in Muncie community

Graduate Assistant, Office of Student Life, Greek Life

Ball State University

Sep 2013 – May 2015 • 1 yr 9 mos

Muncie, Indiana

- Served as the graduate advisor for the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) and 7 member organizations
- Built and fostered relationships with National Pan-Hellenic Council chapter advisors and state/regional directors
- Managed expansion of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. by working with state and regional directors
- Advised Gamma Rho Lambda, Alpha Gamma Delta, Delta Tau Delta, Sigma Nu, Sigma Phi Epsilon, and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. for their chapter accreditation plans
- Served on a rotation for the Greek Life on-call emergency hotline
- Chaired the Accreditation Review Committee for improvement and enhancement of the accreditation program with representation from Interfraternity, National Pan-Hellenic, and Panhellenic Councils
- Served as the graduate advisor the Student Government Association, its executive board, and Student Senate comprised of 30+ student leaders representing different campus constituencies
- Assisted in the design of a graduate level seminar focused on student engagement assessment
- Assessed and evaluated campus safety initiatives for students by serving on University public safety committee

Harm Reduction Services Practicum Student

Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity

Jan 2015 – Apr 2015 • 4 mos

- Coordinated the logistics for the Alcohol Skills and Training Program (ASTP) training for member chapters with alumnae volunteers and undergraduate leadership.
- Transformed the Alcohol Skills and Training Program (ASTP) presentation to meet headquarters branding and marketing standards
- Assisted in the development, curriculum, and marketing of a sexual assault prevention program for members

Messaging



•Analyzed data from Greek Life Edu on alcohol consumption and behavior from three-year collection process for presentation to the National Council

See more positions ▾

Education

Ball State University
Master's Degree, Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education
2013 - 2015

Certificate in College and University Teaching

Illinois Wesleyan University
Bachelor's Degree, English
2009 - 2013

University of Utah
Certificate in Victim Advocacy



